

Frequently Asked Questions of the GEAR UP Iowa Framework for Student Success



1. How do schools determine which services to include on the Implementation Plan?

Using the data elements provided in each section, schools should be able to determine the level of services needed. It may help to look at aggregate level data for tier 1 services and student level data for tiers 2 and 3. Keep in mind that services do not have to be provided for every student in the cohort. It is best to offer services for small groups of students based on their needs.

2. How often are Implementation Plans submitted?

CARTeams and School Planning Teams will work with the assigned GEAR UP Iowa Facilitator to develop and submit an Implementation Plan every year. Plans are usually due in late spring for the upcoming academic year.

3. Can plans be changed once they have been approved?

Yes. The School Planning Team can make changes to the Implementation Plan and/or budget anytime throughout the year by submitting an amendment on Iowa Grants.

4. What if one service falls under more than one component?

Efforts were made to avoid overlap but there may be occasions where one service falls into more than one component. For example, similar services may be found in College and Career Exposure as well as Application and Enrollment. The Facilitator will help determine where the service applies best and schools will be asked to select a different service for the other component.

5. How do the CARTeams and School Planning Teams determine what data to use?

A list of data reports is provided for every component but schools are allowed to select the reports based on availability through the district/school and the needs of the school. GEAR UP Iowa will provide periodic data reports throughout the year as well.

6. Is professional development allowed?

Yes. Professional development is built into tier 3 in most of the components. However, there must be a direct correlation between professional development and GEAR UP goals and objectives. Expenses for professional development must be reduced to a minimal amount and it must show a direct impact on the cohort. All out-of-state travel must be approved by the Program Office at the U.S. Department of Education and GEAR UP Iowa prior to making arrangements.

7. Are supplies and equipment allowed?

Supplies are allowed as long as they align with the service and costs are kept to a minimal amount. Keep in mind that all supplies, including technology items, must move with the GEAR UP cohort. Equipment is considered a large scale purchase of one item costing \$5,000 or more and such purchases are unallowable with GEAR UP funds. For more information on purchasing procedures, refer to the Procurement Guidelines shown on the GEAR UP Iowa website.

8. What type of reporting requirements exist related to outcomes?

Schools are required to track most services in the SCRIBE data tracking system provide by GEAR UP Iowa. SCRIBE will be used to generate reports for School Planning and CARTeam meetings as well as inform the annual performance report required by the U.S. Department of Education. Schools are not required to submit a written report at the end of the year unless specifically requested.

If a service cannot be tracked in SCRIBE or another quantitative format, the School Planning Team will provide a general overview and update during monthly meetings in order to keep the GEAR UP Iowa Facilitator informed. For example, if a school is using differentiated instruction as a service, the School Planning Team will provide a progress update to the Facilitator at least on a quarterly basis or once per quarter.

9. Is it okay to only offer tier 1 services?

Technically, yes. Tier 1 is the only required tier and GEAR UP Iowa acknowledges that many schools are already providing those services. *However*, the goal of the components is for students to receive a *minimum* level of services and opportunities. Most GEAR UP students *need* more than tier 1 services which is why it is highly recommended for schools to utilize GEAR UP funds to the upmost benefit of the student. The more support and opportunities a GEAR UP student receives, the more likely they are to be successful beyond high school.